



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
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PRESS RELEASE

Rare Maps Acquired by Texas General Land Office Archives and Records

Mapping the Border of the Republic of Texas and United States at the Texas General Land Office

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AUSTIN — For images of the maps or to order a reproduction, please visit [Map of the River Sabine from Logan's Ferry to 32nd degree of North Latitude](#) and [Part of the Boundary between the United States and Texas from Sabine River Northward to the 36th mile mound](#).

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Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush is pleased to announce the acquisition of some of the most important maps in Texas history by the Texas General Land Office Archives. This historic acquisition is an incomplete set of the Republic of Texas and United States Boundary Commission maps, surveyed 1840-1841, which represents one of the most important sets of maps in our state's history because it shows the final boundary between Texas and the United States from the Gulf of Mexico to the Red River, settling the boundary dispute between the two countries. The language describing the boundary was not in question during this controversy; however, the actual physical location of the boundary was uncertain because so little was known of the area at that time. As a result of the boundary survey, a large area thought to be part of Arkansas was determined to be a part of Texas.

“180 years ago today, on April 21, 1836, Sam Houston’s army defeated Santa Anna’s forces at the Battle of San Jacinto, thereby winning independence for the Republic of Texas,” said Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush. “These maps helped define the Republic of Texas, and they help define us. It is important for a state institution like the Texas General Land Office to facilitate public access to these maps because of the connection to our past they provide, the property rights they secure now, and our mission to preserve Texas history into the future.”

The work on this acquisition is not complete. The entire set of boundary maps is considered one of the six most important map sets in Texas history by legendary Texana collector Thomas W. Streeter. The complete boundary map set is extremely scarce and incredibly expensive; in fact, the last complete set sold for more than \$100,000. The GLO purchased this incomplete set of maps for \$8,750. Donations are

currently being accepted to help offset this acquisition, and to purchase the remaining maps in the set. GLO map curators are now searching for the missing pieces of the set, and encouraging the public to complete the set by locating the remaining items, by donating funds to purchase the remaining maps, or by donating the maps so they can be conserved for future generations.

The maps were acquired from Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps, Inc. (Raremaps.com). Ruderman offered the GLO a substantial discount to help acquire these maps.

“I am excited to help this remarkable piece of Republic of Texas history find its way back to Texas and the General Land Office. When I learned that the original manuscript survey maps were still in the Texas General Land Office and that the manuscript maps at the GLO differed from the printed versions produced by the United States government in Washington, there was no choice but to help these maps go to the place where they would become an active part of Texas history. Hopefully, it will also inspire someone to make a side by side comparison and document the differences -- there may yet be an untold chapter in the history of the Republic that emerges from this comparison. I can't imagine the consequences, but I can imagine it would make for an interesting discussion between Texas and Washington,” said Ruderman.

One of the first researchers who will make use of the new maps at the GLO is Dr. Jim Tiller, Professor of Geography at Sam Houston State University. Dr. Tiller donated funds towards the acquisition of these maps, and encourages others to do the same.

“I am very proud to have played a small part in the GLO's acquisition of maps produced by the 1840-1841 Joint Boundary Commission related to the establishment of the eastern boundary of the Republic. My research in this period and area has profited immensely over the years from resources and materials available in the GLO archives. I encourage those with an interest in Texas history and geography to join in the efforts of this office to secure maps and other resources related to our state's unique history,” said Dr. Jim Tiller.

“These maps augment our extensive collection of more than 45,000 maps and sketches and enhance the GLO Archives - one of the premier cartographic collections in Texas and the Southwest,” said Commissioner Bush. “It's important for the public to know that their help is needed in preserving our history. It's one thing for a state agency to work to save Texas history, but the real success happens when individuals, non-profits, and businesses draw their own line in the sand, and say ‘I want to help save Texas history too.’”

Save Texas History, a project of the Texas General Land Office, is dedicated to preserving and promoting the historic documents and maps of the General Land Office Archives, serving as a teaching resource for Texas history education, and serving as a resource for digitizing Texas history. No general revenue from the Legislature is appropriated for this purpose. The conservation and promotion of these Texas treasures depends solely on private donations, map and document duplications, and corporate sponsorships. All donations made to the GLO, either financial contributions for conservation or donations of items such as archival maps, are tax deductible pursuant to Internal Revenue Code §170(c)(1).

The recently acquired maps can be viewed online, as well as the other 45,000 maps, sketches and drawings of the Texas General Land Office Archive. To view the Archive,

donate to the Save Texas History program to help fund the acquisition of maps, or to adopt a document or map, visit www.SaveTexasHistory.org or call 512-463-3289.

To see all Republic of Texas/United States Boundary maps at the General Land Office, visit <http://www.glo.texas.gov/history/archives/map-store/index.cfm#search/0/joint%20boundary%20commission>.

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